

Members of the Committee,

My name is Bridget Medbery. I am not a lifelong resident of North Dakota, but I have chosen to call it home.

In November of 2023, I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. I had just recently turned 32. There is no history of cancer in my family that I know of. I get wellness checkups regularly. I never saw this coming. And I only found out because an ultrasound identified suspicious large cysts in both of my ovaries when I was sick with a kidney stone. After having surgery to remove my kidney stone, I had another surgery to hopefully just remove the cyst from my right ovary so it wouldn't cause future issues; meanwhile, the surgeon would also pull a sample from the cyst in my left ovary to biopsy. I lost my right ovary that day when the cyst ruptured. The other cyst was discovered to be a borderline malignant tumor. My chance of naturally conceiving was starkly reduced in such a short time.

I should have suspected something was wrong. I had never been pregnant. I still have never been pregnant. But I wanted to do whatever I could to try to build a little family of my own with the little time I had left, knowing another surgery to remove my left ovary – and possibly other parts – was looming. I actually went through a cycle of IVF. I had so much hope that this devastating diagnosis could turn into something beautiful. For unknown reasons, the process didn't work for me, and I thought that was it for my family, but through a series of events I have been blessed with more time to try. However, that time is still limited.

If this bill passes, another chance to create a family would be carved away from me like my ovary was, because this bill, as it is written, does not explicitly protect the IVF process.

In closing, I would like to quote part of the testimony Emily Lindquist submitted ([34358](#)) because I don't think I could say it any better myself:

“Recommending **Do Not Pass** on this bill does not make you pro-abortion. It does not mean you are against the criminalization of someone who murders or harms a baby in the womb. It does not mean you don't value the lives of unborn children. Recommending **Do Not Pass** means that you understand there is too much gray area with this bill, and that you are protecting the citizens you were chosen to serve by allowing us the choice to do what is right for us.

Nobody values the lives of the unborn more than parents who have experienced loss or infertility. Today we are fighting for their lives. I ask you to fight with us, for the future of North Dakota and for our children, by recommending **Do NOT Pass** on House Bill 1373.”

Thank you for your time,

Bridget Medbery
West Fargo, ND